

FRANCIS JAMES BROWN

14. BALLYHILL RD.

ULSTER THE FACTS

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Dedicated
to
The Memory
of
Robert Bradford
Member of Parliament
for South Belfast
Murdered
by I.R.A. Terrorists
on
Saturday 14th November 1981.

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About the Authors



Rev. Ian R. K. Paisley, M.P., M.E.P.

Rev. Dr. Ian R. K. Paisley, Leader of the Ulster Democratic Unionist Party. Member of the British Parliament for North Antrim. First elected Member for Northern Ireland to the Parliament of Europe with the highest vote ever recorded in British elections. Member of the Parliament of N. Ireland, Bann Side Constituency (Prime Minister Terence O'Neill's former seat). Leader of the Opposition and Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. Member of the N. Ireland Assembly. Member of the N. Ireland Convention. Member of the Political and Energy Committees of the European Parliament. Minister of Martyrs Memorial Church, Belfast and Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster.

Married (wife — Eileen), five children. Author of many publications, including "America's Debt to Ulster".



Alderman Peter D. Robinson, M.P.

Alderman Peter D. Robinson M.P. overturned a massive 17,000 majority to defeat Rt. Hon. William Craig and become the Member of the United Kingdom Parliament for East Belfast in 1979 and one of the youngest M.P.'s in the British House of Commons. Elected to Castlereagh Borough Council in 1977. Topped the poll in recent Local Government elections and received a larger percentage vote than any other candidate in Ulster. Deputy Mayor Castlereagh 1978. General Secretary Ulster Democratic Unionist Party 1975-1979. Deputy Leader of Ulster Democratic Unionist Party, since 1979, Party Housing Spokesman. Born 29-12-1948. Married 25-7-1970 (wife — Iris). Two children. Author: *The North Answers Back* (1969); *Capital Punishment for Capital Crime*; (1976); *Self-Inflicted* (1981); *Ulster in Peril* (1981); *Savagery and Suffering* (1981). Chairman of a N. Ireland publishing firm.



The Rt. Hon. John D. Taylor, M.E.P.

The Rt. Hon. John D. Taylor, B.Sc., C.Eng., Member of Her Majesty's Privy Council (N.I.) 1970-. Member of the European Parliament for Northern Ireland 1979-. Member of Parliament, Stormont 1965-73. Member of the N.I. Legislative Assembly, Stormont 1973-75. Member of the N.I. Constitutional Convention, Stormont 1976-77. Minister of State in N.I. Cabinet for Home Affairs 1970-72. Born 24-12-1937. Married 30-12-1970 (wife — Mary Francis née Todd). Five children. Political Party — Ulster Unionist Party. Religion — Elder in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Political Interests: Ulster in the United Kingdom; Southern Irish Political Attitudes; Turkey and the Western Alliance; Cyprus Internal Politics; Regional Policy in Western Europe.



Last photograph ever taken of the Rev. Robert Bradford outside the U.S.A. Consulate Général, Belfast with his colleagues on 13th November, 1981.

Tribute to Rev. Robert Bradford M.P.

Tribute to the Rev. Robert Bradford M.P.

On Saturday 14th November, Nineteen Hundred and Eighty One the appalling news that the Rev. Robert Bradford, Official Unionist Member of Parliament for South Belfast, had been murdered by the Provisional I.R.A. broke across Ulster. The result was something like the result of the announcement of the tragedy of the Battle of the Somme. No death in Northern Ireland has brought forth such a response from the heart of the Ulster people like the death of Robert Bradford. It seems as if all the other slaughters of the I.R.A. had been gathered up and concentrated in one terrible murder, and that murder the murder of the South Belfast Member of Parliament.

Throughout the whole of Northern Ireland, in the City of Belfast and especially in his constituency, in Londonderry the other major city of our Province, in all the towns, in all the villages, in all the hamlets and in all the homesteads of the Loyalist people there came a great shadow of grief and agonising despair. Ulster started to weep for one of her sons and would not be comforted because he was not.

Birth and Boyhood

Robert Bradford was born in the County Londonderry town of Limavady on the 8th June, Nineteen Hundred and Forty One. When he was aged three, because of great family difficulties, he was fostered to Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson of 40 Hunter Street, Belfast. Dad and Mum Nicholson became to Robert his beloved parents and looked after him with affection and with the greatest of all gifts — the gift of Christian nurture and Godly upbringing. Robert attended Blythe Street School in Sandy Row, and was brought up in the heartland of Ulster Loyalism and Protestantism — the famous Sandy Row area of Belfast.



The young Robert.

He left school at fourteen. He then went to London and worked for some time with an optician there. He returned to Ewart's Linen Mill and after a spell there entered an Accountants Office.

Conversion and Call to the Christian Ministry

He was brought up to attend the Grosvenor Hall — the Citadel of Irish Methodism, and at the age of eleven he made a public profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. From that decision he never wavered.

After listening to an American preacher at a special series of meetings in the Grosvenor Hall Robert felt the call to the Christian ministry, and at the age of eighteen he commenced studying in Shaftesbury House in order to meet the requirements to enter Edgehill Theological College — the Ministerial Training College of the Irish Methodist Church.

During his early days he was interested in football and did play for a time, when he was in London, for the Second Team of Sheffield Wednesday. He also played for the Ulster teams, Glenavon and Distillery. His love of soccer remained with him — while attending Edgehill College and Queen's University he was capped to play in the team which met the Scottish Universities, and in fact was chosen as Captain of that particular team. When he went to the House of

Commons he played in one match for the Commons against one of its great rivals, but owing to illness he wasn't able to continue the exercise.

He was appointed on circuit in Lisnaskea and Fivemiletown, and also spent two years in Cregagh Methodist Church as an assistant. Thursday 11th June 1970 was an all-important day in Robert's life. He was ordained in the Grosvenor Hall. The Rev. Brian O'Gorman the President of the Conference, the Rev. James Davidson, the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland officiated. One of the hymns at his ordination became a firm favourite with him — Wesley's great Hymn:

*"O Thou that camest from above,
Thy pure celestial fire to impart,
Kindle a flame of sacred love,
On the mean altar of my heart".*

Thinking of Robert's death the last verse which he loved is most appropriate:

*"Ready for all Thy perfect will,
My acts of faith and love repeat,
'Till death Thy endless mercy see,
and make the sacrifice complete".*

Suffolk

Upon ordination he went to Suffolk — the Upper Falls Congregation of his Church, and at Christmas 1969 the announcement was made of his engagement to Norah the younger daughter of Mrs. Thompson and the late Rev. W. E. Morley Thompson. Morley Thompson had been President of the Methodist Church in the year Nineteen Hundred and Forty-Eight.

In his first charge Robert was to learn in a very hard field of service just what the Loyalist community were coming under by the pressures and atrocities of the I.R.A. murder gangs. He witnessed the blowing up of his Church Hall by the Provisional I.R.A. The reason for this act of atrocity was because his people had given succour and refreshments to the members of the British Army and the Security Forces serving in that area. His ministry also had great encouragements and joys. The stonelaying ceremony for the new Church took place on the 27th February, 1971, and on Sunday morning the 19th September, 1971 the new building was opened and dedicated for the use of his congregation.

Robert became an Orangeman in 1971 and in the same year joined the

Royal Black Institution. His Orange Lodge was the Cross of St. Patrick, L.O.L. 688, and his Preceptory was the Royal Black Knights of St. Patrick R.B.P. 146.

Marriage

Norah Thompson and Robert Bradford were joined together in Holy Matrimony on Saturday December 5th, 1970. The ceremony took place in the Chapel of Unity Methodist College, and the Reception afterwards was in the Wellington Park Hotel. Rev. Robert Wilson and the Rev. Eric Gallagher officiated.

Active Politics

As a member of the Official Unionist Party Robert lined up with the Vanguard section of that Party led by the Rt. Honourable William Craig, and when that section of the Party formed themselves to what was then called the Vanguard Unionist Progressive Party, Robert became a candidate for them in the Election to the Northern Ireland Assembly when he polled 2,587 first preference votes.

After the coming together of the Official Unionists under the leadership of the Rt. Honourable Harry West, the Vanguard Unionists under the leadership of the Rt. Honourable William Craig and the Democratic Unionists under the leadership of Dr. Ian Paisley to form the U.U.U.C. Robert was chosen as the United Ulster Unionist candidate for South Belfast. He had a decisive and impressive victory over the sitting member, the Official Unionist Mr. Rafton Pounder. Robert's victory was the first announced and it put a thrill through the whole Province. It was the harbinger of a massive sweep for the United Ulster Unionist Council, and eleven of the twelve Ulster seats at Westminster were captured. At the next Election Robert consolidated his win and then when the Vanguard Party disintegrated over Mr. Craig's idea of a Voluntary Coalition with the Social Democratic and Labour Party (Republicans) Robert joined the Official Unionist Party, and at the last Election tightened his hold upon South Belfast.